

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Charles M. Russell

National Wildlife Refuge

Wildlife List



Welcome



This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, located along the Missouri River and scenic Fort Peck Reservoir in Central Montana, is a 1.1 million-acre Refuge that contains native prairie, forested coulees, river bottoms, badlands, and the 250,000-acre Fort Peck Reservoir. Refuge wildlife include mule and white-tailed deer, elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, coyote, bobcat, beaver, sharp-tailed grouse, and many species of migratory birds.

Common songbirds in spring and summer are the western meadowlark, vesper sparrow, yellow warbler, and lark bunting. Popular shorebirds include the upland sandpiper, long-billed curlew, and mountain plover. Thousands of mourning doves nest on the Refuge. Bald eagles are quite common near the east end of the Refuge during winter and early spring.

An Auto Tour Route near the west end of the Refuge offers good access to bird watching areas. Most of the Refuge offers bird watching opportunities, but many of the roads and trails become impassable during inclement weather. Visitors should take special precautions when entering remote areas of the Refuge.

About this Checklist

The 276 species of birds listed in this leaflet have all been observed on or near the Refuge according to the latest edition of *Montana Bird Distribution* and local bird watchers. All species names are in accordance with the A.O.U. Checklist of North American Birds, 7th edition, 1998, and 42nd supplement (2000) to the checklist. For clarity, some of the former names are shown in parentheses. Those species listed as

“vagrants” have been observed only a few times on the Refuge. Please report any additional sightings of vagrants to the Refuge staff.

Seasons of Occurrence

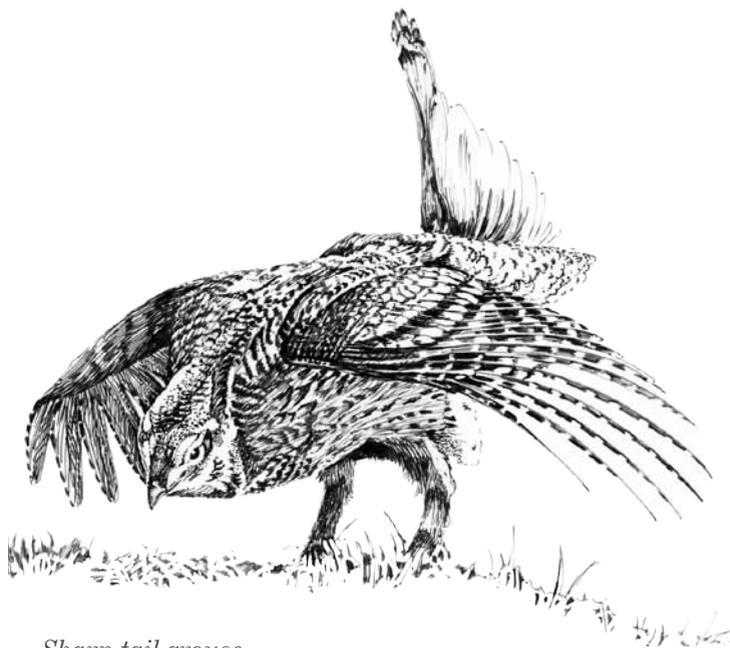
Sp Spring (March-May)
S Summer (June-July)
F Fall (August-November)
W Winter (December-February)

Seasonal Abundance

a abundant, common species, very numerous
c common, certain to be seen in suitable habitat
u uncommon, present, but not certain to be seen
o occasional, seen only a few times during a season
r rare, seen once a year or less
v vagrant, less than five sightings on the Refuge

Other Codes

- Species known to nest on the Refuge



Sharp-tail grouse

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Loons				
Red-throated Loon			v	
Pacific Loon			r	
Common Loon	c	u	u	
Yellow-billed Loon			v	
Grebes				
• Pied-billed Grebe	c	c	c	
Horned Grebe	u		u	
Red-necked Grebe	r			
• Eared Grebe	c	c	c	
• Western Grebe	c	c	c	
Clark's Grebe	u	u	u	
Pelicans				
American White Pelican	c	c	c	
Cormorants				
• Double-crested Cormorant	c	c	c	
Bitterns, Herons, and Egrets				
• American Bittern	u	u	u	
• Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	r
Snowy Egret		r		
Little Blue Heron	v			
Black-crowned Night-Heron	c		o	
Ibises and Spoonbills				
White-faced Ibis	r			
New World Vultures				
Turkey Vulture		o		
Swans, Geese, and Ducks				
Greater White-fronted Goose	o		o	
Snow Goose	u		u	
Ross' Goose	r		r	
• Canada Goose	c	c	c	o
Tundra Swan	o		o	
• Wood Duck	o	o	o	
Gadwall	c	c	c	
• American Wigeon	c	c	c	
American Black Duck			r	r
• Mallard	a	c	a	c
• Blue-winged Teal	c	a	c	
• Cinnamon Teal	r	r	r	
• Northern Shoveler	c	c	c	
• Northern Pintail	a	c	c	o
• Green-winged Teal	c	c	c	o
• Canvasback	c	u	c	

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
• Redhead	c	u	c	
Ring-necked Duck	o		o	
• Lesser Scaup	c	u	c	
Surf Scoter			o	
White-winged Scoter	r		r	
Black Scoter				v
Long-tailed Duck (<i>formerly Oldsquaw</i>)			r	
Bufflehead	c	u	c	o
Common Goldeneye	c	u	c	c
Barrow's Goldeneye	o		o	r
Hooded Merganser	u		u	
• Common Merganser	c	u	c	c
Red-breasted Merganser	c	o	o	
• Ruddy Duck	c	u	c	
Osprey, Kites, Hawks, and Eagles				
• Osprey	c	c	u	
Bald Eagle	c		u	c
• Northern Harrier	c	a	c	o
• Sharp-shinned Hawk	u	u	u	
• Cooper's Hawk	o	o	o	
Northern Goshawk	o		o	
Broad-winged Hawk	r		r	
• Swainson's Hawk	c	c	c	
• Red-tailed Hawk	a	c	a	
• Ferruginous Hawk	o	u	o	
Rough-legged Hawk	c		c	c
• Golden Eagle	c	c	c	c
Falcons and Caracaras				
• American Kestrel	c	a	c	o
• Merlin	u	r	u	o
Gyrfalcon				r
Peregrine Falcon	r		r	r
• Prairie Falcon	u	u	u	o
Gallinaceous Birds				
• Gray Partridge (<i>introduced</i>)	c	c	c	c
• Ring-necked Pheasant (<i>introduced</i>)	c	c	c	c
• Greater Sage-Grouse	c	c	c	c
• Sharp-tailed Grouse	c	c	c	c
• Wild Turkey	u	u	u	u
Rails				
Virginia Rail	r	r		
• Sora	u	u	u	
• American Coot	c	c	c	o
Cranes				
Sandhill Crane	c		c	

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Plovers				
Black-bellied Plover	o		o	
American Golden-Plover	r		r	
Semipalmated Plover	c		c	
• Piping Plover	u	u	u	
• Killdeer	c	a	c	
Mountain Plover	u	u	u	
Stilts and Avocets				
• Black-necked Stilt	r	r		
• American Avocet	u	u	u	
Sandpipers and Phalaropes				
Greater Yellowlegs	c	c	c	
Lesser Yellowlegs	c	c	c	
Solitary Sandpiper	c	c	c	
• Willet	c	u	c	
• Spotted Sandpiper	c	c	c	
• Upland Sandpiper	u	o	u	
Whimbrel	r		r	
• Long-billed Curlew	u	u	u	
Marbled Godwit	u	u	u	
Ruddy Turnstone		r	r	
Sanderling	u	u	u	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	u	r	u	
Western Sandpiper	u	u	u	
Least Sandpiper	c	u	c	
White-rumped Sandpiper	r			
Baird's Sandpiper	c	u	c	
Pectoral Sandpiper	u		r	
Dunlin	r			
Stilt Sandpiper	r	r	u	
Buff-breasted Sandpiper			v	
Long-billed Dowitcher	c	u	c	
• Wilson's Snipe	c	c	c	
• Wilson's Phalarope	c	c	c	
Red-necked Phalarope	u		u	
Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls, and Terns				
Pomarine Jaeger			v	
• Franklin's Gull	u	c	a	
Bonaparte's Gull	u		u	
Mew Gull				v
• Ring-billed Gull	c	a	c	o
• California Gull	c	a	c	o
Herring Gull	u	r	u	c
Thayer's Gull	o		o	o
Glaucous-winged Gull	o			o
Glaucous Gull				u
Great Black-backed Gull				v

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Sabine's Gull		v		
Black-legged Kittiwake				v
• Caspian Tern	u	u	u	
• Common Tern	c	c	u	
• Forster's Tern	c	c	u	
• Least Tern	o	o		
Black Tern	u	u	u	
Pigeons and Doves				
Rock Dove (<i>introduced</i>)	o	o	o	o
Band-tailed Pigeon		v		
• Mourning Dove	a	a	a	
Cuckoos and Anis				
• Black-billed Cuckoo		u	u	
Typical Owls				
• Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	c
Snowy Owl	o			o
Northern Hawk-Owl			v	
Northern Pygmy-Owl	r			
• Burrowing Owl	c	c	c	
• Long-eared Owl	u	u	u	u
• Short-eared Owl	u	u	u	u
Northern Saw-whet Owl	u	u	u	u
Nightjars				
• Common Nighthawk	u	a	a	
• Common Poorwill	c	a	c	
Swifts				
• Chimney Swift	o	u	u	
• White-throated Swift		u		
Hummingbirds				
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			o	
Rufous Hummingbird			v	
Kingfishers				
• Belted Kingfisher	c	o	c	
Woodpeckers				
• Red-headed Woodpecker	u	u	u	
Red-naped Sapsucker	r			
• Downy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
• Hairy Woodpecker	c	c	c	u
• Northern Flicker	c	c	c	u

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Tyrant Flycatchers				
• Western Wood-Pewee	c	c	u	
Willow Flycatcher	o	o		
• Least Flycatcher	c	c	c	
Dusky Flycatcher	o	o		
Cordilleran Flycatcher	o	o		
• Say's Phoebe	c	c	c	
Cassin's Kingbird		r		
• Western Kingbird	c	c	c	
• Eastern Kingbird	c	a	c	
Shrikes				
• Loggerhead Shrike	c	c	c	
Northern Shrike	o		o	u
Vireos				
• Warbling Vireo	c	c	o	
Philadelphia Vireo		v		
Red-eyed Vireo	u	o		
Crows, Jays, and Magpies				
Blue Jay	o	o	o	o
Pinyon Jay	c	a	c	
• Clark's Nutcracker	r	r	r	
• Black-billed Magpie	c	a	c	a
• American Crow	c	o	c	
Common Raven	r	o		
Larks				
• Horned Lark	a	a	a	u
Swallows				
• Tree Swallow	c	c	c	
• Violet-green Swallow	u	u	u	
• Northern Rough-winged Swallow	u	u	u	
• Bank Swallow	c	a	c	
• Cliff Swallow	c	c	c	
• Barn Swallow	c	c	c	
Titmice and Chickadees				
• Black-capped Chickadee	c	c	c	c
Mountain Chickadee	o	o	u	o

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Nuthatches				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	c	c	c	o
White-breasted Nuthatch	o		o	r
Creepers				
Brown Creeper	o		r	
Wrens				
• Rock Wren	c	c	c	
• House Wren	c	c	c	
Marsh Wren	r	c	r	
Dippers				
American Dipper	u	u		
Kinglets				
Golden-crowned Kinglet	o		o	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	o		o	
Thrushes				
• Eastern Bluebird	r	r	r	
• Mountain Bluebird	c	a	c	
Townsend's Solitaire	o		u	o
Veery	r			
Gray-cheeked Thrush	o	o		
Swainson's Thrush	o	u		
Hermit Thrush	o	u		
• American Robin	c	a	c	o
Mimic Thrushes				
• Gray Catbird	c	c	c	
Northern Mockingbird	r			
• Sage Thrasher	u	u	u	
• Brown Thrasher	c	c	c	
Starlings				
• European Starling	c	c	c	o
Wagtails and Pipits				
American Pipit (<i>Water</i>)	o		o	
• Sprague's Pipit	u	u	o	
Waxwings				
Bohemian Waxwing	c		c	a
• Cedar Waxwing	c	u	u	o

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Wood Warblers				
Tennessee Warbler	r			
Orange-crowned Warbler	u		u	
• Yellow Warbler	c	c	c	
Magnolia Warbler			r	
Cape May Warbler			r	
• Yellow-rumped Warbler	c	o	u	
Townsend's Warbler			r	
Palm Warbler	o		o	
Blackpoll Warbler	o	o	o	
Black-and-white Warbler	u	r	u	
American Redstart	u	u	u	
Ovenbird	u	u	u	
Northern Waterthrush	o	o		
Connecticut Warbler			v	
MacGillivray's Warbler	r	r	r	
Common Yellowthroat	c	c	c	
Wilson's Warbler	u		c	
Canada Warbler			v	
Yellow-breasted Chat	u	u	u	

Tanagers

Western Tanager	c	o	c	
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Sparrows and Towhees

• Green-tailed Towhee	o	o		
• Spotted Towhee	c	c	c	
American Tree Sparrow	c		c	o
• Chipping Sparrow	c	a	c	
• Clay-colored Sparrow	c	c	u	
Brewer's Sparrow	r	r		
• Field Sparrow	u	c	u	
• Vesper Sparrow	u	c	u	
• Lark Sparrow	u	c	u	
• Lark Bunting	a	a		
Savannah Sparrow	u	c	u	
Grasshopper Sparrow			u	
Baird's Sparrow			u	
• Song Sparrow	c	c	c	
Lincoln's Sparrow	o		r	
Swamp Sparrow	r			
White-throated Sparrow	o		o	
Harris' Sparrow	c		c	
White-crowned Sparrow	c		c	
Golden-crowned Sparrow				v
Dark-eyed Junco	c	o	u	r
McCown's Longspur	o		o	
Lapland Longspur	u		u	u
• Chestnut-collared Longspur	u	c	u	
Snow Bunting			o	u

Common Bird Name	Sp	S	F	W
Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Allies				
Northern Cardinal		v		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	u	u	u	
• Black-headed Grosbeak	u	u	u	
• Lazuli Bunting	r	u	r	
Indigo Bunting		r		

Blackbirds and Orioles

Bobolink	o		o	
• Red-winged Blackbird	c	a	c	o
• Western Meadowlark	a	a	a	o
• Yellow-headed Blackbird	c	a	c	
Rusty Blackbird	r		r	
• Brewer's Blackbird	c	a	c	
• Common Grackle	o	c	o	
• Brown-headed Cowbird	c	c	c	
• Orchard Oriole	o	o	o	
• Bullock's Oriole	c	c	c	
• Baltimore Oriole	c	c	c	

Finches

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	u		u	o
Pine Grosbeak			u	u
• Red Crossbill	u	c	u	c
White-winged Crossbill			r	
Common Redpoll	u			u
Hoary Redpoll	r			r
Pine Siskin	c	o	o	o
Lesser Goldfinch			v	
• American Goldfinch	c	a	c	
Evening Grosbeak				u

Old World Sparrows

• House Sparrow (<i>introduced</i>)	a	a	a	a
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Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. Dial 7-1-1 for a free connection to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech and hearing impaired. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 406 / 538 8706 or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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